



Emergency Care / Coverage Policy

Policy Title: Ophthalmology coverage for MMC Patients

Date: 7/30/13

Policy Statement

MMC does not have a comprehensive ophthalmology emergency coverage program.

Ophthalmologists will provide inpatient consultation daily 8a to 10p for patients admitted to the hospital or the clinical decision unit (CDU) of the emergency department. They will provide follow up care for patients treated by ED staff who do not have their own ophthalmologist. The program will manage multi-trauma patients with eye injuries.

Emergency referrals for patients with isolated eye conditions from outside hospitals will not be accepted.

Policies & Procedures

When is consultation available: Daily 08:00 – 22:00

How to request a consultation:_ All requests must be placed through One Call - 662-6632.

Requests for consultation should be approved and reviewed by the most senior team member available and preferably, the attending physician. The patient's symptoms, visual capability, fundamental eye exam and the purpose of the consult should be presented. Any member of the care team may make the call but the ophthalmologist may request to speak with a more senior or knowledgeable provider.

Requests can be placed at any time of night or day.

Consultation requests placed outside of the hours noted above will be held, batched and communicated to the ophthalmologist in the morning. The ophthalmologist will prioritize the requests and either see the patients directly or contact MMC providers for more information.

Inpatients and Patients coming through the MMC emergency department

ED medical staff will provide a screening examination. If this reveals an emergency condition, ED staff will provide necessary stabilizing treatment.

If it is determined that a patient can be discharged but will need ophthalmology follow-up, the patient will be referred to their personal ophthalmologist or to the coverage ophthalmologist if the patient is without his/her own ophthalmologist.

Patients who are determined to need ophthalmologic evaluation before being sent home will be physically or administratively placed in the CDU to be seen there in consultation by the ophthalmologist.

Staff of the pediatric, medical, surgical / trauma, etc. services will be responsible for requesting consultation for inpatients or patients being admitted from the emergency department.

If the ED or admitting medical staff feels that the definitive treatment by an ophthalmologist cannot wait until the hours of availability, the patient will be transferred to a suitable facility.

If the covering ophthalmologist feels that he / she does not have the clinical skill-set to render the care needed, the patient will be transferred.

One-Call will be able to facilitate transfers. The Tufts Department of Ophthalmology has agreed to be a resource.

Inter-hospital transfer / consultation requests

OneCall operators will tell referring clinicians that MMC does not provide emergency coverage for **isolated** ophthalmologic conditions. They will offer the name and number of facilities that may be contacted to provide that coverage.

Multi-trauma victims with concomitant eye injury may be accepted.